

EduTrust Certification Scheme

What Private Education Institutions
Need to Know





WHAT IS EDUTRUST?

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The EduTrust certification scheme is a voluntary certification scheme administered by the Council for Private Education for private education institutions in Singapore.

While the EduTrust certification scheme is voluntary, it is one of the prerequisites which private education institutions that enrol international students must meet to qualify for the issue of Student Passes, as stipulated by the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA). The scheme provides a means for better private education institutions to differentiate themselves as having achieved higher standards in key areas of management and provision of educational services.

An EduTrust-certified private education institution may be awarded one of the following certificates:

Certification	Validity Period	Characteristics
EduTrust Star	4 years	This award is given to a private education institution for having excelled in all key areas of management and the provision of quality education services. This mark is also a symbol of recognition for sustained efforts in organisational improvement.
EduTrust	4 years	This award is given to a private education institution for having achieved satisfactory to commendable performance in key areas of management and the provision of educational services.
EduTrust Provisional	1 year	This award is given to private education institutions which have attained a minimum level of performance in key areas of management and the provision of educational services. In accepting the award, the organisation acknowledges the need for improvement in its existing management practices and service provisions, and strives to achieve this.



WHAT DOES EDUTRUST CERTIFY?

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The EduTrust certification scheme requires a private education institution to meet minimal standards in six broad areas of its operations before it can be awarded an EduTrust certificate. These six criteria and their sub-criteria are:

1 Management Commitment and Responsibilities

This criterion examines a private education institution's leadership system, its commitment to achieve its vision and how responsibilities are spelt out to ensure that its mission is met. These areas can be grouped into the following sub-criteria:

- 1.1 Vision and Mission
- 1.2 Values and Culture
- 1.3 Strategic Planning
- 1.4 Defining Responsibilities
- 1.5 Management Representative

2 Corporate Governance and Administration

This criterion examines how a private education institution manages its key areas of operations and resources effectively and efficiently to meet its vision and mission.

- 2.1 Management of Financial Resources
- 2.2 Management of Resources and Facilities
- 2.3 Management of Human Resources
- 2.4 Management of Partnerships
- 2.5 Communication and Publicity
- 2.6 Management of Information
- 2.7 Management of Feedback and Complaints

3 External Recruitment Agents

This criterion examines how a private education institution selects, manages and monitors its local and overseas external recruitment agents effectively to ensure that the agents consistently deliver quality services and do not engage in any misrepresentation and unethical practices.

- 3.1 Selection of Agents
- 3.2 Management of Agents
- 3.3 Monitoring of Agents

4 Student Protection and Support Services

This criterion examines the quality of student protection and student support services provided by a private education institution to enhance student welfare and well-being for a holistic education.

- 4.1 Fee Protection Scheme
- 4.2 Student Contract
- 4.3 Refund Process
- 4.4 Transfer / Withdrawal Process
- 4.5 Student Support Services

5 Academic Processes and Assessment of Students

This criterion examines how a private education institution sets up processes to ensure that courses offered are of high quality, and meet the needs and expectations of the students and the industry.

It also examines how a private education institution monitors the progress of the students through the most appropriate modes of assessment to achieve course outcomes. The private education institution is further assessed on its system to select and recruit the most appropriate staff to deliver the courses to achieve learning outcomes.

- 5.1 Curriculum Design and Development
- 5.2 Curriculum Planning and Delivery
- 5.3 Student Selection and Admission
- 5.4 Monitoring of Learning and Student Development
- 5.5 Student Tracking
- 5.6 Student Assessment
- 5.7 Selection of Part-time Academic Staff

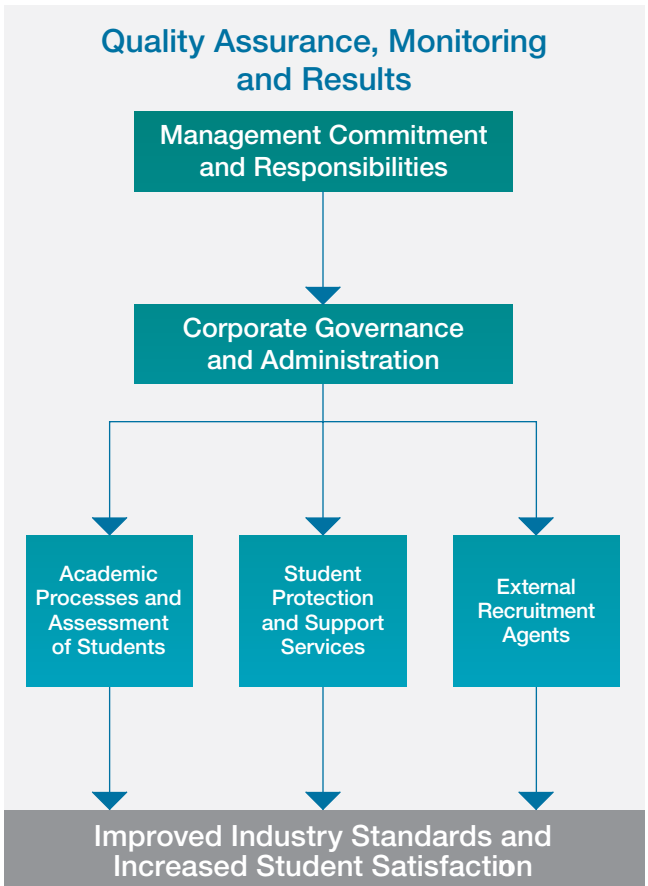
6 Quality Assurance, Monitoring and Results

This criterion examines the quality assurance system established by a private education institution to meet EduTrust requirements aimed at continual improvement. The sub-criteria are:

- 6.1 Measurement and Analysis
- 6.2 Self-review and Assessment
- 6.3 Management Review
- 6.4 Continual Improvement



THE EDUTRUST FRAMEWORK



PREREQUISITES FOR EDUTRUST APPLICATION

A private education institution must satisfy the following prerequisites before it can apply for EduTrust certification:

1 Registration

A private education institution seeking to apply for EduTrust certification must first be registered with the Council for Private Education under the Enhanced Registration Framework.

2 Management Representative (MR)

The private education institution must also appoint a member of its management team as its management representative (MR) for the EduTrust certification scheme. The MR will be responsible for communicating with the Council for Private Education, and should be empowered to implement or facilitate the implementation of all requirements of EduTrust.

3 Credit Rating

A credit rating report must be submitted to the Council for Private Education at the point of the private education institution's application for EduTrust certification, and annually, after it has been certified, as stipulated by the Council.

The reports must be issued by an agency from the list of participating credit rating agencies maintained by the Council of Private Education. Each report should not be more than three months old prior to its submission to the Council.

The credit rating of the private education institution must also meet a minimum acceptable result stipulated by the Council before the private education institution is eligible to submit an application for EduTrust certification, or for subsequent continued certification.

4 Medical Insurance

The private education institution must purchase medical insurance coverage that meets the minimum requirements set by the Council for Private Education for all the students' hospitalisation and treatment throughout their course duration.

International students holding passes other than the Student's Pass, and students who are Singapore citizens or permanent residents, who are already covered by their own medical insurance plans, can opt out of the medical insurance scheme.

5 Fee Protection Scheme (FPS)

The private education institution must protect the total fees paid by all students via an escrow bank account or an insurance scheme provided by appointed service providers.

Escrow Account

- Under the escrow bank account arrangement, the private education institution must open an escrow bank account for all its students. The students are to deposit all their fees into the escrow bank account
- Funds in the escrow bank account are disbursed to the private education institution only if specified milestones and conditions are met

Insurance Scheme

- Under the insurance scheme, the private education institution is required to purchase insurance protection for each student to protect his / her fees

- Private education institutions can only collect up to a maximum of six months* worth of course fees

With the protection provided either through an escrow bank account or insurance scheme, payouts of unconsumed fees are given to the students if the private education institution with which they are enrolled were to cease operations, or if a judgment order to pay is obtained by the students against the private education institution in dispute cases.

EDUTRUST CERTIFICATION APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

After a private education institution has met the prerequisites mentioned earlier, it can apply for voluntary EduTrust certification by the following process flow:

- 1** The private education institution needs to submit an online application for EduTrust certification, together with an upfront payment, through the Online Business Licensing Service (OBLs).
- 2** The private education institution must also submit two to three hard copies of complete sets of standard documents and the corresponding soft copies to the Council for Private Education within a month of submitting its application for EduTrust certification.
- 3** An assessment team will be appointed to handle the application. The team will review the submitted documents in a desktop assessment.

* Applies to a private education institution which has bought general insurance for its students under the Enhanced Registration Framework (ERF). Upon obtaining EduTrust certification, the private education institution may collect up to 12 months of fees per instalment.

- 4** Upon successful completion of the desktop assessment, the appointed Lead Assessor will arrange with the private education institution to go through a two- to three-day site assessment.
- 5** Assessors will evaluate the findings and present the major findings verbally to the private education institution during the closing meeting of the site assessment. Subsequently, the Lead Assessor will send an assessment report for the private education institution's inputs, as well as a request for Corrective Action Plans (CAP) to address key weak areas, if any.
- 6** The assessors will evaluate the CAP submitted by the private education institution, and upon acceptance, make a recommendation to the Council for Private Education on the type of EduTrust certification to award.
- 7** Based on the decision made by the Council for Private Education, the private education institution will receive a notice regarding the result of its EduTrust application. After the necessary fees have been paid, the result will be released to the private education institution. If it has been given an EduTrust award, it can collect its certificate from the Council for Private Education.
- 8** The entire process, from Step 3 (complete document submission) to Step 7 (issuing notification of the EduTrust application result to the private education institution), should not take more than three months generally. Any delay caused by the private education institution's incomplete document submission, late submission of the CAP, or late return of inputs for the assessment report would not be counted as part of the three-month process stated above.

PEI* submits on-line application and makes payment via OBLS⁺

PEI submits two to three sets of standard documents to CPE[#] within a month

CPE assessors conduct desktop review of submitted documents

CPE assessors conduct site assessment of PEI

CPE assessors present major findings verbally to PEI, followed by an assessment report for the PEI's inputs, and a request for Corrective Action Plans

CPE assessors submit recommendation of type of EduTrust certification to award

CPE approves recommendation

PEI receives EduTrust certificate

*PEI = Private Education Institution

⁺OBLS = Online Business Licensing Service

[#]CPE = Council for Private Education

EDUTRUST MARK

Only private education institutions with valid EduTrust certificates are allowed to use the EduTrust mark. A copy of the EduTrust mark style guide, which provides guidance on the use of the EduTrust mark, will be given to the private education institution upon award of the EduTrust certificate. The mark may be used in the private education institution's brochures and advertisements, as well as printed on its letterheads and business cards.

More details on the terms and conditions of the EduTrust certification scheme, and other information related to the scheme, can be found on the Council for Private Education's website: www.cpe.gov.sg.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1 Can a private education institution apply for EduTrust certification if it does not intend to enrol international students holding Student Passes (STP)?**

Yes, EduTrust is a voluntary certification scheme. Private education institutions which do not intend to enrol such students can also apply to be EduTrust-certified.

2 Can a private education institution apply for EduTrust certification if its CaseTrust accreditation is still valid?

Yes, a private education institution can apply for EduTrust certification even though its CaseTrust certificate is still valid.

3 What are the key differences between the requirements of EduTrust and CaseTrust?

EduTrust looks into the following areas which are currently not covered in the CaseTrust for Education scheme:

- Financial management and health of the private education institutions
- Greater emphasis on academic processes such as course design and development, student tracking and development, assessment of students and selection of teachers
- Protection of the local students' fees. Currently, CaseTrust requires only the fees paid by international students to be protected
- The private education institution's performance measurement objectives, conduct of internal quality audit and review, and continual improvement programmes
- The provision of compulsory medical insurance coverage for all students. However, students who are Singapore citizens, permanent residents or international students holding Student Passes can choose to opt out if they are already covered by their own medical insurance plans

4 How long does it take to be EduTrust-certified?

The turnaround time from applying for EduTrust certification to receiving the EduTrust certificate is about three months. Actual timing depends very much on the readiness of the private education institution applying for EduTrust certification, and the time taken to respond to requests for Corrective Action Plans on areas identified during the site assessment.

5 What is the validity of the EduTrust certificate?

An EduTrust certificate is valid for a period of either one year or four years, depending on the result of the assessment.

6 What is the renewal process for EduTrust certification like?

An EduTrust-certified private education institution is required to apply for a renewal of its EduTrust certificate through the Online Business Licensing Service (OBLS) at least five months before the certificate's expiry. The

renewal assessment is similar to that for the initial or new assessment.

7 Can a newly-established private education institution seek EduTrust certification?

Yes, a newly-established private education institution can also apply for EduTrust certification.

8 How does the EduTrust certification scheme benefit students?

The EduTrust certification scheme provides assurance of a private education institution's quality standards as it is given to private education institutions which have met the minimum standards in key areas of management and the provision of educational services. These private education institutions must also be of reasonable financial health.

EduTrust-certified private education institutions are also differentiated by the type of EduTrust awards they receive, based on the Council for Private Education's assessment of their performance. These awards are made known publicly to enable students to make a more informed choice when deciding which private education institution to enrol in.

Another benefit from the introduction of EduTrust is the protection of students' fees.

9 Why is there a need to include local students under the Fee Protection Scheme?

As more local students enrol in private education institutions, there is a need to extend fee protection to them as well. The Fee Protection Scheme ensures that in the event of a private education institution ceasing operations, all its students, whether local or international, would be able to recover the balance of their fees.

10 How will the public know which are the EduTrust-certified private education institutions?

Members of the public can refer to the Council for Private Education's website (www.cpe.gov.sg), which will show the status of the private education institutions' application for EduTrust certification, as well as the awards that they have attained.

Photo on page 6 is by courtesy of the Ministry of Education (MOE).

For further information, please visit the Council for Private Education's website at www.cpe.gov.sg.

Council for Private Education

2 Bukit Merah Central #05-00
SPRING Singapore Building
Singapore 159835

Tel: (65) 6499 0300

Fax: (65) 6275 1396

E-mail: CPE_CONTACT@cpe.gov.sg

www.cpe.gov.sg

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